

They answer do-it-yourself questions

Katie and Gene Hamilton, creators of HOUSENET on America Online and on the World Wide Web, will bring their hands-on expertise to the fourth annual Fall Remodeling Show to answer the definitive remodeling question, "Should you do it yourself?"

As seen on NBC's "Today Show" and Lifetime Channel's "Our Home," the answer, says Katie, is "not always." The couple's weekly newspaper column, which is syndicated by the Los Angeles Times, answers the same question about a multitude of home repair and improvement projects in papers such as the Chicago Tribune, Cleveland Plain Dealer and The Daily Oklahoman.

Their quick-fix career got its start when the newlyweds bought their first fixer-upper, a small brick duplex in suburban Chicago in the late 1960s. Fourteen houses later, the former teachers



have taken on new students — homeowners.

The Hamiltons have written more than 10 home improvement books, including "Don't Move

... Improve," "Quick Fix Home Repair Handbook," "How To Be Your Own Contractor" and "Keep It Working ... Longer, Better." They are frequent contributors to magazines like Home Mechanix, Workbench, Popular Mechanics, Home and Family Circle.

"We've made most of the mistakes a homeowner can make and we like sharing what we've learned," Gene said.

They say that their interaction with computer users helps them do their job better by giving them insights into what homeowners want to know.

Their "Do-it-yourself or not?" column analyzes the cost, time and skill required to complete a project. The column actually compares the cost and time of doing a job oneself versus having a professional do it.

Painting is the best do-it-yourself project, saving the homeowner about 50 percent of what a painting contractor charges.

"You'll save the most money by doing unskilled work the professionals don't want to do, like removing wallpaper or gutting a room."

Other good projects to do oneself are

adding insulation, caulking and weather stripping.

The Hamiltons used to do everything themselves but learned they had to look at the time commitment and dollars. They've concluded that sometimes it pays not to do it yourself. Some jobs the Hamiltons always subcontract now include installing dry wall and sanding old floors.

The Hamiltons will present seminars on when you should do it yourself and when to hire a contractor, coping with a handyman special and finding good contractors and working with them at the Fall Remodeling Show. Seminar times are 3, 4, 6 and 8 p.m. Thursday; 3, 5, 6 and 8 p.m. Friday; noon and 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8 p.m. Saturday; and noon and 1, 3 and 4 p.m. Sunday. After each seminar, they will be available to answer questions. Call (810) 737-4478.

Saarinen design featured on area house tour

A home designed by nationally recognized Cranbrook architects Eliel and Eero Saarinen is among the five unusual and historically varied residences featured on this year's AIA Detroit House Tour.

The tour, taking place Sunday, Sept. 29, is sponsored by the AIA Detroit, a chapter of the American Institute of

Architects.

Each year for the past 12 years, AIA Detroit has presented this special opportunity for the public to visit beautifully restored older residences, as well as newer homes designed by talented local architects.

Five homes, in Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Farms and Grosse Pointe

Woods, will be in this year's event. Among the featured architects are Saarinen, Swanson and Saarinen and Ronald Mayotte & Associates of Troy.

Groups will depart by motor coach 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. from The Neighborhood Club, 17150 Waterloc, Grosse Pointe.

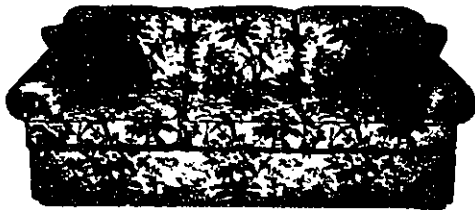
Tickets for the tour may be bought prior to the event for \$13 per person.

Call (313) 965-4104 for information. A limited supply of tickets will be available at the door for \$15 per person.

All proceeds will benefit AIA Detroit academic scholarship and public awareness programs, which include high school career days and design competitions, as well as public tours of architecturally significant buildings.

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